

March 1987

ANN HILL RESEARCH

Interview with Jim and Agnes Davidson (Addenda)
13 Victoria Road, Annan. (formerly Hayfield)

School

Jim Davidson talked again about Mr Christie and Tom Tait, who was belted 'for no reason' and left school at 12 - but his may have been because of his father, who lived at Redhall, died and left a young family, Tom being the oldest. Tom, the bread winner, carried on at Redhouse with Charlie Mackie.

He confirmed what others have said about Mr Christie being a heavy drinker. He had a wife, and a daughter (who went with 'John Drip', much older, so called because of his nose).

He used to send boys to get soup from the soup kitchen. One day he saw from the window a boy jabbling the hot bowl, spilt some - so got belted.

who

the boy

Church

The Davidsons went to Chapelknowe for years - to Mr Eaglesham's Church, as did others (see Robin Irving) including Farish of Newton (which may be how Jim Davidson and Agnes Davidson, m.s. Farish, became friendly?). Mr Eaglesham married a sister of James Barr, a famous preacher who went into politics for Labour. His second son, Robin (?) went to Russia and was never heard of again.

Sport and
Entertainment

Jim Davidson talked about the early tennis courts, which were close to the Fauldingcleugh road, behind Jocky Johnstone's shop. He said it was a very good quality green. There were two tennis courts with at one time 60 members. He quoted one of Jim Mitchell's witticisms on seeing Margaret or Mary Elliot playing, referring to their initials - 'If that's no ME I'll eat my hat'. But for some reason the old man they had the green off took pet and took the court from them. John Lamont got the land later.

We talked a little about the W.R.I. of which both Mrs Davidsons - Jim's mother and Agnes Davidson - were presidents, but we hadn't time to go into W.R.I. history.

Ted Lockhart was - like Charlie Mackie (?) - a singer of comic songs. Jim Mitchell sketch - see miscellaneous.

Economic

Mrs Agnes Davidson was the grand-daughter of T C Lamb, the quarry manager. She never met him, but she knew that he had taken a lot of people out east with sandstone, probably to Singapore. One of the workmen, old Tom Sawyers, had shown her a photo of T C Lamb in a rickshaw. He then went to live in Edinburgh, possibly Barnton, where he re-married a prima-donna - although the second marriage may have been before the quarry closed. The story is probably told in the first interview. If not - T C Lamb by his first marriage had 3 daughters, Margaret, Agnes and Ethel. Margaret - Aunt Maggie - attracted the second wife's interest because she was musical, so she lived with the Lambs at the Oaks, sang a lot at local soirees, married John Beattie in Baurough ('Bargh') farm, became crippled with rheumatics, and has a daughter who lives in Canonbie.

Agnes married Edward Farish and was the mother of Mrs Agnes Davidson. T C Lamb had 2 daughters, Caroline and Violet by the second marriage.

There was a meeting about electricity in the village around 1927. Quite a lot of people didn't want it.

Alexandra Cottage - see miscellaneous.

Farming

They confirmed what Grace Carson had suggested, that the lead towards Holsteins came from the Connells. Jim Connell, who died fairly young, had, I think, 2 children, Hugh and Craig (called after his mother, Jean Craig). Craig, who'd been to Wallace Hall, and was the only non-Jehovah's Witness in the family - went out to Canada, and somehow passed on the idea of breeding Holstein cattle from there. Colin Davidson at Hillhead now has a famous herd. The mother still lives in the village and has always had the initials J C - Jean Craig, Connell and now another C. She lives next Alexandra Cottage - of which more anon. There is a sister, Caroline, a nurse.

Robert Davidson at Wickethorn and Jim Davidson's father were cousins, but not very friendly (he mentioned how his mother, a peace loving woman tried to keep the peace between them). Robert Davidson was very successful, but had no family. I think they had brought up one of T C Lamb's grand-daughters - Greta (Margaret) and had angered Mrs Davidson's mother by the way they talked about it. Robert Davidson (who was considered mean) went to East Scales. He had shares in the Milk Marketing Board, of which he was very proud. Greta married Andrew Davidson of Hayfield, and, I think, is now Mrs Davidson of Luce Mains.

Hayfield used to have a ploughman in the cottage - Ned Glendinning was the last, he later went to Blacketlees, to look after it. They had a day worker (great big Jimmy Forsyth) and a hired hand in the bothy, which is now a workshop. The cottage is now all plastered up, used as a cattle shelter.

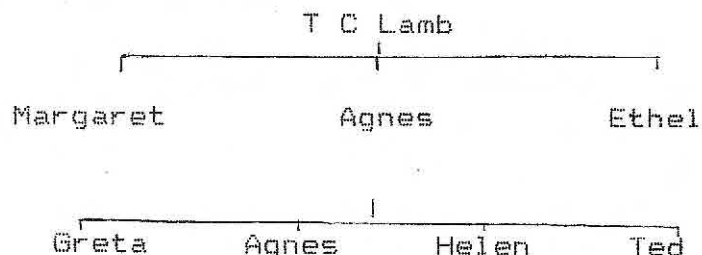
Colin (Hillhead) was among the first to have a milking parlour. Hillhead, earlier under Mackies, had its own generator. Jim Mackie took Hillhead over at a time of agricultural depression, and had a bad time. At Hayfield they got a milking machine around 1935, Andrew Beattie having got one a year or so before (I think that would be their Beattie relations). They were to be helped to put it in, but had to try to do it all themselves - which led to 'pandemonium'.

There was a horsemill at Newhope, one at Hillhead destroyed in the fire, but never used (Jim Davidson could remember the Newhope one being used for bruising, even after the war). Raeburnhead had a water wheel, Raeburnside a horse mill. They had water wheel too, handy except when water was short - but they had a pond with a sluice and dam. He thought Raeburnside had a dovecot, no knowledge of one at Hayfield, although always a few pigeons about.

Hillhead had a moss, and Hayfield rights on Raeburnhead.

Miscellaneous Alexandra Cottage so called because built for local Queen Alexandra Nursing Service. The District Nurse always lived there. Old Mrs Davidson helped in the W.R.I. and Red Cross, which Mrs Graham of Mossknow had to do with. The cottage, they opined, had been ruined by modernisation.

Davidson family trees:-



Mr & Mrs Helen Farish

Robert James Edward Janet Maggie Bella

Agnes = Jim Davidson

If I've got this right, Edward Farish must have married Agnes Lamb.

On the other side 'old' Mrs Davidson's maiden name was Dunlop - Dunlops being the tenants at Newhope.

Tom Tait - a peace loving character (I've got 'drink' beside him). His son lives in Eden Place, Annan.

Mrs Davidson described the only sketch she saw Jim Irving and Jim Mitchell do - Jim Mitchell was supposed to have gout and people kept banging into his leg (sounds a bit Laurel and Hardy).

~~(Andrew Davidson left school at 15 - cycled to Annan Academy - Harry cycled too. John's 55th wedding anniversary just past. Helen Dark's father and Jim Davidson's (?) mother (?) had been friends at Kettleholm.)~~

Granny Davidson died aged 92 about January 1963. She was a great baker of fruitcake for the holidays - while 'Aunty' (Miss Davidson) made scones. Mrs Davidson's faculties were good till the end. She used to look after the books.

I remarked that some people had been reluctant to introduce tractors, at which point Mrs Davidson laughed and pointed an accusing finger at Jim Davidson, who admitted to a fondness for horses, which I think, they used to breed.